**Amendments to the Claims:**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for ~~use in~~ recommending at least one item using a recommender for evaluating the closeness of ~~two items~~ one item to another item, each of said items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, said method comprising the steps of:

computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of each of said ~~two~~ items to other items based on an overall similarity of classification of all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature values; ~~and~~

aggregating the distances between each of said symbolic feature values to determine the closeness of ~~said two~~ each item to the other items;

based on the determined closeness, generating a recommendation of at least one of the items; and,

generating a display indicative of the recommendation.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said computing step employs a Value Difference Metric (VDM) technique to compute said distance between symbolic features.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said computing step employs a modified Value Difference Metric (MVDM) technique to compute said distance between symbolic features.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein said distance, $\delta$, between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic feature is given by:

$$\delta(V1, V2) = \sum | C1i/C1 - C2i/C2|^r$$

wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into class i and C1 is the total number of times V1 occurred in the data set.

5.     (Original)  The method of claim 1, wherein said items are programs, classes of interest are "watched" and not-watched" and wherein said distance, δ, between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic feature is given by:

$$\delta(V1, V2) = \left| \frac{C1\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_watched}{C2\_total} \right| +$$

$$\left| \frac{C1\_not\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_not\_watched}{C2\_total} \right|$$

wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into class i and C1_total is the total number of times V1 occurred in the data set.

6.     (Original)  The method of claim 1, wherein one of said items is a cluster mean.

7.     (Original)  The method of claim 1, wherein said items are programs.

8.     (Original)  The method of claim 1, wherein said items are content.

9.     (Original)  The method of claim 1, wherein said items are products.

10.    (Currently Amended)  A method for recommending at least one item by assigning an items to one or more groups of items, each of said items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, said method comprising the steps of:

computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of said item and at least one item in each of said groups, said distance based on an overall similarity of classification of all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature values;

aggregating the distances between each of said features values to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in each of said groups; ~~and~~

10 assigning said item to said group associated with a minimum distance value; and,

generating a display indicative of the items assigned to at least one of the groups.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said computing step employs a Value Difference Metric (VDM) technique to compute said distance between symbolic features.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said computing step employs a modified Value Difference Metric (MVDM) technique to compute said distance between symbolic features.

13. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said distance, $\delta$, between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic feature is given by:

$$\delta(V1, V2) = \sum | C1i/C1 - C2i/C2|^r$$

wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into class i and

5 C1 is the total number of times V1 occurred in the data set.

14. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein said items are programs, classes of interest are "watched" and not-watched" and wherein said distance, $\delta$, between two values, V1 and V2, for a specific symbolic feature is given by:

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$$\delta(V1, V2) = \left| \frac{C1\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_watched}{C2\_total} \right| +$$
$$\left| \frac{C1\_not\_watched}{C1\_total} - \frac{C2\_not\_watched}{C2\_total} \right|$$

wherein C1i is the number of times V1 was classified into class i and C1_total is the total number of times V1 occurred in the data set.

15.     (Original)  The method of claim 10, wherein one of said items is a cluster mean.

16.     (Original)  The method of claim 10, wherein said items are programs.

17.     (Original)  The method of claim 10, wherein said items are content.

18.     (Original)  The method of claim 10, wherein said items are products.

19.     (Currently Amended)  A system ~~for use in a recommender for evaluating the closeness of two items~~ recommending television programs, each of said ~~items~~ programs characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

a memory for storing computer readable code representing a program

5      guide; and

a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

       compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of ~~said two items~~ programs based on an overall

10           similarity of classification of all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature values; ~~and~~

       aggregate the distances between each of said symbolic features values to determine the closeness of said ~~two items~~ programs; and,

15           generate one or more program recommendations for display in accordance with the determined closeness.

20.    (Currently Amended) A system for use in a recommender for evaluating the closeness of ~~two items~~ content, programs, or products, each of said ~~items~~ content, programs, or products characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

5    means for computing a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of said ~~two items~~ content, programs, or products based on an overall similarity of classification of all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature values; ~~and~~

means for aggregating the distances between each of said symbolic

10    features values to determine the closeness of said ~~two items~~ content, programs, or products; and,

means for displaying a recommendation of at least one of the content, programs, or products.

21.    (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture for use with a recommender for evaluating the closeness of two items, each of said items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable

5    code means embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of said two items based on an overall similarity of classification of all instances for each possible value of

10    said symbolic feature values; ~~and~~

a step to aggregate the distances between each of said symbolic features values to determine the closeness of said two items; and,

a step to recommend at least one of the items based on

15    the determined closeness.

22.    (Currently Amended)    A    system    for    ~~assigning    an~~ recommending at least one of a plurality of item<u>s</u> ~~to one or more groups of items~~, each of said items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

a memory for storing computer readable code; and

5            a processor operatively coupled to said memory, said processor configured to:

compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of said item<u>s</u> and at least one <u>other</u> item in each of ~~said~~ <u>one or more</u> groups, said distance based on an overall similarity of

10            classification of all instances for each possible value of said symbolic feature values;

aggregate the distances between each of said features values to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in each of said groups; ~~and~~

15            assign <u>each of</u> said item<u>s</u> to <u>a one of</u> said group<u>s</u> associated with a minimum distance value<u>; and</u>

<u>store an indication of the items assigned to one or more</u> <u>of the groups in the memory</u>.

23.    (Currently Amended) An article of manufacture for assigning an item to one or more groups of items, each of said items characterized by at least one symbolic feature, comprising:

a computer readable medium having computer readable code means

5    embodied thereon, said computer readable program code means comprising:

a step to compute a distance between corresponding symbolic feature values of said item and at least one item in each of said groups, said distance based on an overall similarity of classification of all instances for each possible value of said symbolic

10            feature values;

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a step to aggregate the distances between each of said features values to determine the closeness of said item and at least one item in each of said groups; ~~and~~

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a step to assign said item to said group associated with a minimum distance value; and,

a step to generate a recommendation of the item based on the group to which it is assigned.